

Town of Merrimack, NH



Request for Proposals 2012 Master Plan Update

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Merrimack (NH) Planning Board is soliciting proposals for professional consulting services to assist the Board in updating its 2002 Master Plan. The updated plan will serve as a guide in considering policy changes, land use planning, budget preparation and capital improvement planning for the Town of Merrimack's future. It is anticipated that work will begin during the month of January, 2011 and that the finished product will be ready for adoption by the Planning Board at a public hearing during the Spring of 2013. Interested parties are encouraged to submit complete proposals, including cost estimates, no later than 4:00 pm on December 6, 2010, to:

Walter Warren, Director
Community Development Department
6 Baboosic Lake Road
Merrimack NH 03054.

Finalists will be invited to review their proposals in a meeting with the Merrimack Planning Board.

II. PROJECT SCHEDULE & BUDGET

It is expected that the project will start early in CY 2011, and be completed in April of 2013 – with on-going project activities occurring over the course of 24-28 months, in three distinct phases. Due to municipal budget constraints, funding for the project is expected to be as follows:

Phase I FY'11 (7/1/10 – 6/30/11) - \$30,000 - (Funded)
Phase II FY'12 (7/1/11 – 6/30/12) - \$45,000 - (Subject to appropriation)
Phase III FY'13 (7/1/12 – 6/30/13) - \$45,000 - (Subject to appropriation)

Therefore, responders are cautioned to take the above schedule and funding into account – recognizing that each phase should contain a “stand alone” set of tasks and deliverables to be accomplished within the specified funding limits.

III. COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The Town of Merrimack is NH's eighth largest municipality – with an expected 2010 Census population of over 28,000. Situated between NH's two largest cities (Nashua and Manchester), Merrimack has experienced periods of explosive growth in the past. Unlike neighboring communities however, Merrimack still offers substantial areas of undeveloped land for future commercial, industrial, and residential development. The 2012 Master Plan Update is viewed as critical in guiding future development, particularly given the following that have occurred since the completion of the 2002 update:

- ✧ The continued expansion and prosperity of the Manchester Airport, and the accelerated completion of the Airport Access Road, providing

- improved highway access to large parcels of undeveloped land in the north end of town;
- ✧ The approval and recent start of construction of the 500+KSF Merrimack Premium Outlet Mall project – the town’s largest commercial development to date – scheduled to open in 2012;
- ✧ The apparent abandonment of the Hudson Circumferential Highway project – long expected to provide a Merrimack River crossing and enhanced access to south Merrimack;
- ✧ The potential for passenger/commuter rail service to town;
- ✧ The advent of legislative requirements pertaining to Workforce Housing (per RSA 674:58-61);
- ✧ Major changes in the global/national/regional economic climate which could affect land use and development decisions;
- ✧ Major changes in social/political attitudes which will affect land use and development demands;
- ✧ The challenges presented by a growing inventory of vacant, under-utilized, outdated commercial and industrial facilities;
- ✧ The increased responsibilities for environmental compliance on matters such as stormwater management, shoreland protection, water quality protection, etc;
- ✧ The potential changes in workplace activities, such as “telecommuting”.

It is expected that each of the above considerations will need to be factored into the discussions that will determine the recommendations for each of the master plan elements noted below. Although the “development landscape” is shifting, Merrimack remains uniquely poised to take advantage of the opportunities presented by these changes.

Master planning services are expected to include analysis, consultation, and recommendations regarding alternative land use and development strategies to maximize desired benefits and minimize negative impacts of growth. As such, the Consultant is expected to bring a broad range of experience and technical talent to the process. In addition, the Consultant is expected to provide competent policy consultation to the Town throughout the Master Planning process, and coordinate activities with appropriate regional (NRPC, etc) and State (DOT, DES, etc) agencies.

IV. OVERALL SCOPE OF SERVICE (Cumulative - Phases I through III)

The Consultant is expected to provide all information required by NH RSA 674:2 – 4, a summary of which is provided below (*Note: Elements/chapters marked “***” exist in the current (2002) Master Plan*). The Consultant shall include in the proposal any tasks and services deemed necessary to satisfactorily complete the project.

A. Required Scope - Master Plan Preparation

1. Executive Summary** – Provide an Executive Summary of the 2012 Master Plan Update – including a summary of recommendations for each of the included master plan elements.
2. Vision Statement(s) – Provide a section which provides the Vision for the 2012 Master Plan Update, which articulates the desires of the Town and its citizenry, and which will provide the guiding principles and priorities for the Plan's implementation. The Vision shall direct all other sections of the Master Plan.
3. Land Use**
 - i. Existing land use map, narrative, and analysis;
 - ii. Analyze existing land use patterns and regulations against future expectations to determine Merrimack strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats;
 - iii. Future land use map, narrative, and analysis.
4. Transportation** – Provide a full study (inventory, analysis, and recommendations) regarding Merrimack's transportation system (for people, freight, and information), including but not limited to:
 - i. Roadway (vehicular) network (including consideration of the State's 10-year Highway Plan);
 - ii. Alternative/Non-Vehicular (pedestrian, bicycle, other) transportation networks;
 - iii. Mass/public transit alternatives;
 - iv. Analysis of strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats present that effect potential to capitalize on air, rail, information technology alternatives;
 - v. Analysis of local/regional/state integration and Merrimack's competitive position.
5. Community Facilities** - Provide a study (inventory, analysis, and recommendations) of Merrimack's community facilities, including but not limited to measure(s) of use, and ability to service populations of existing and future land use plans.
6. Economic Development** - Provide a full analysis of the town's economy, including but not limited to:
 - i. Examine the existing economic base and contrast to current/projected economic conditions;
 - ii. Examine and assess Merrimack's current and projected labor force and employment position within the region – and identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for future action.
7. Natural Resources** – Identify critical and sensitive natural resources and areas, along with strategies for their protection and preservation in the course of future development. To include water resources management and protection plan (per RSA 4-C:22).

8. Natural Hazards Section – Identify and assess natural hazards that may cause a threat to the Vision of the Master Plan, along with strategies for avoidance/mitigation of such hazards in the course of future development.
9. Recreation** – Inventory and assess existing facilities and resources, and identify strategies to provide for existing and future demands.
10. Utility and Public Services** – Identify and assess all existing public and private utilities which serve the town and recommend strategies for addressing future demands.
11. Cultural and Historic Resources** - Identify and assess existing resources, and recommend strategies for their preservation and protection against adverse impacts from other/future land uses and developments.
12. Regional Concerns – Identify and analyze areas or issues of “significant regional concern”, highlighting the nature of the concern or conflict, and suggesting possible solutions (or alternative means for resolving).
13. Neighborhood Plan(s)** - Update current Town Center Plan, recognizing more recent studies and efforts. This element may expand to include other “neighborhood plans” (Airport Access Road Zone, for example).
14. Community Design – Identify and assess positive physical attributes of Merrimack, and outline the design goals and policies necessary to guide future public and private development.
15. Housing** - Provide a full study (inventory, assessment, recommendations) of the town’s housing market, stock, and conditions, and recommend strategies to address future housing needs (including regional need) for all age/income levels, and including workforce housing.
16. Implementation – An implementation strategy (including a suggested action program that generally describes the actions, time frames, responsibilities, and procedures) necessary for implementing the Vision of the Master Plan. Intended to address and monitor the priority issues raised in all other elements of the Plan.
17. Energy Section – Identify the energy issues affecting Merrimack (wind and solar power, LEEDS, geo-thermal, ??) and recommend actions necessary to develop more “sustainable” future land uses and energy resources.
18. Other topic areas as deemed appropriate by the consultant and/or the Master Plan Committee.

B. SUGGESTED SCOPE – Consultant Flexibility Encouraged

The Planning Board recognizes that the constraints imposed on the schedule and budget by the Town affect the consultant's ability to deliver the full scope of services outlined above. Therefore, the Board suggests the following Priorities to Consultants, in fashioning their response to this solicitation:

Phase I – Required Master Plan Elements (per RSA 674:2-4)

- 1) Vision Statement (see #2, above)
 - a. Statements articulating the desires of the Town and its citizenry;
 - b. Guiding principles and priorities regarding the Plan's implementation.
- 2) Land Use Section (including Future Land Use)
 - a. Translation of Vision statements into physical terms/goals;
 - b. Analysis of existing conditions and presentation of Future Land Use recommendations (based on certain studies of population, economic activity, and natural/historic/cultural resources).

Phase(s) II and III – All Remaining Master Plan Elements

The Board solicits and encourages input from the Consultant regarding the most appropriate way to “package” the remaining elements of the Total Scope into the schedule and budget constraints for Phases II and III presented above. To encourage maximum consultant flexibility in responding, the Board requires no particular priority or sequence for fulfilling the remainder obligations of the Total Scope. Rather, the Board respects the experience and expertise of the respondents, and is interested in hearing and discussing the individual respondent's proposal(s) for accomplishing the Total Scope within the schedule and budget constraints outlined.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is vital to the success of the Master Plan Update. It is expected that citizen committees will be created to provide input and review specific chapters/elements of the master plan. Previous master plan efforts have utilized Steering Committees, comprised of 30-40 elected and appointed officials and residents at-large. However, the Board is open to suggestions from the consultant as to the manner in which public input can be encouraged and incorporated into the project – such as, but not including, the use of various emerging social media channels and techniques.

In any event, it is expected that numerous public meeting/hearings will be conducted in the course of the formulation of the final Plan, and that posting of interim and final drafts will be made on the Town's web site. The consultant will also be responsible for making presentations to community service and social clubs, as appropriate. It is also expected that one or more formal public

presentations will be required of the consultant, prior to the adoption of the final Plan.

Respondents are encouraged to include in their response their recommended methods for soliciting and incorporating public input into the Master plan Update process, based upon their experience in the field.

VI. TOWN OF MERRIMACK STAFF INVOLVEMENT

While the Community Development Staff, and other municipal staff, will be closely involved with preparation of the Master Plan, existing work commitments preclude them from spending substantial time conducting research, writing documents and staffing meetings. It is essential that the consultant be able to dedicate the time and staff needed to conduct these tasks independently and to lead the Master Plan project. Consultant proposals should therefore include a description of what, if any, Town staff assistance will be expected or requested in the course of completing the proposed project.

VII. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All responses to this RFP must be received in a sealed envelope and clearly marked "MERRIMACK MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL" by 4:00PM, on December 6, 2010 to be eligible for consideration. Proposals shall be submitted to:

Community Development Department
ATTN: Walter Warren
6 Baboosic Lake Road
Merrimack NH 03054

Please submit ten (10) copies of the RFP response and one (1) PDF version on CD.

VIII. REVISIONS TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFP, an addendum will be sent to all those who received the original document.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY

The Town of Merrimack assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by Proposers in responding to this RFP or in responding to any further request for interviews, additional data, etc.

X. MATERIALS AND DELIVERABLES

The Consultant will be responsible for providing all necessary materials including drafts of the Master Plan at Master Plan Committee meetings and workshops. Electronic distribution of materials, or posting of materials to the Town's web site, is encouraged – provided that the method(s) for such distribution are approved by the Planning Board in advance. The Consultant shall provide the Town with twelve (12) hard copies, one (1) PDF version, and one (1) editable version of all final documents and maps. The software packages and file formats to be used will be agreed to prior to any work being produced. Maps should be developed for easy integration into the Town's GIS which is ESRI ArcMap Based.

The Town will be responsible for disseminating copies of the final Master Plan Update after its adoption by the Board.

XI. PROPOSAL PREPARATION

In order to facilitate evaluation of the proposals, interested parties are instructed to be concise and to follow the outline below in responding. Proposals that do not follow the outline, or do not contain the required information, may be considered as unresponsive proposals. Additional detailed information may be annexed to the proposal.

XII. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Proposers are requested to be concise and proposals should include, in order, the following:

- A. Letter of Interest/Transmittal;
- B. Executive Summary of the proposal, including the firm's particular perspective on the master planning process and the intended utility of the final planning documents;
- C. Brief organizational profile, including background and experience of the firm;
- D. Previous project summaries, including reference contact information, for a minimum of three (3) projects which are similar in scope and nature to the project described herein, and which demonstrate the firm's ability to complete the project as described. (The Town reserves the right to contact any references provided herein or otherwise obtained);
- E. Proposed Operation Plan and potential Project Schedule including an explanation/discussion of technical approaches and a detailed outline of the proposed services for executing the requirements of the Proposed Scope of Services (please note that the final master plan document as well as all maps and supporting information is expected to be delivered in both hard copy and electronic format). The Operation Plan should include

a timeline of project activities (for all three phases), a general schedule and description for all deliverables, and a general description and schedule of intended meetings both with the public and the Planning Board/Master Plan Steering Committee;

- F. Overview of project management including:
 - i. Project organizational chart including key staff to be assigned, including name(s) and qualification(s) of the firm's principal(s) and/or project manager(s) to be assigned to coordinate and manage the project and name(s) and qualification(s) of all other project personnel proposed to be assigned to the project;
 - ii. Location of office from which the management of the project will be performed;
 - iii. If the firm is proposing the use of sub-contractors for specialized consulting services (such as traffic engineering/analysis, environmental assessments, or similar services) the firm should identify the intended sub-contractors and provide comparable statement(s) of qualification(s) for each such sub-contractor;
 - iv. Summary/matrix of key project personnel's shared project experience;
 - v. A statement or description of the extent of the consultant's expectations regarding Town of Merrimack staff involvement and participation throughout the project.
- G. Cost information (by phase) including a matrix for the project, showing anticipated hours by classification (i.e. Principal, Project Manager, etc.) for the tasks identified in the proposal. A schedule of billing rates by classification, etc. is also desired, along with an itemization of any additional costs not included in the proposal for which the Town may be billed;
- H. Appendices: Resumes of person(s) who will be performing the work, and any such additional information that the Consultant believes will be useful to the Board's review of the proposal.

XIII. SIGNATURE / CERTIFICATION

The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the offer and shall contain a statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm offer for a ninety (90) day period from opening. The proposal shall also provide the following information: name, title, address and telephone number of the individual(s) with authority to contractually bind the company and also who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation for the purpose of clarifying submitted information.

XIV. RIGHT TO REJECT PROPOSALS AND WAIVE REQUIREMENTS

The Town of Merrimack reserves the right to:

- 1) Retain all copies of the Proposals submitted;
- 2) Evaluate submitted Proposals according to criteria that yield the most qualified and capable consultant to assist the Planning Board, in the sole discretion of the Board;
- 3) Accept Proposals from those consultants it deems most qualified and pre-disposed to support the Town's unique interests throughout the project;
- 4) Reject any/all firms or proposals; and
- 5) Waive, or otherwise modify, any of the requirements detailed in this document.

XV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The Town Planning staff, along with the selection subcommittee of the Planning Board will evaluate each proposal based on the documentation requested herein, utilizing criteria, which includes, but is not necessarily limited to or in the order of, the following:

- A. The proposal's responsiveness to the RFP (format, capabilities, work program, approach, clarity, ability to meet proposed schedule, etc.);
- B. Apparent specialized experience and technical competence of the firm and its personnel in the required disciplines, including a thorough knowledge of the legal, federal, state and local land use statutes and regulations;
- C. The qualifications and experience of personnel committed to the project;
- D. The proposal's unique ideas or creativity shown.

Submissions will be evaluated against the Town's interest and needs; and a "short list" of consultants will be invited for an interview with the full Board. Following the interviews, the Board will determine the selected Consultant(s). The Board reserves the right to request additional clarifying information from any consultant, to the extent that it is needed to aid in the final selection. The Board desires to have the final consultant selection completed by mid- to late-December.

XVI. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

The following References and Resources are provided to aid interested parties in responding to this solicitation. For additional information and/or questions, please contact Walter Warren at the Merrimack Community Development Department at (603) 424-3531 or via wwarren@merrimacknh.gov, or visit the Town's web site at www.merrimacknh.gov.

- 1) Town of Merrimack Master Plan Update 2002
- 2) Merrimack Town Center Master Plan (2010)
- 3) Roadway Infrastructure Master Planning Study (2010)

- 4) Horse Hill Nature Preserve Definitive Plan (2006)
- 5) Town of Merrimack Hazard Mitigation Plan (2010)
- 6) Economic Development in Merrimack – Advantages, Opportunities, and Strategy (2008)
- 7) Town of Merrimack Zoning Ordinance & Building Code (2010)
- 8) Town of Merrimack Subdivision Regulations (2010)